

Amendment "D"

Please add new claims 25-27 as indicated below. The state of the claims following this Amendment "D" is as follows:

Claim 1 (previously presented). A method of binding a plurality of sheets into a bound sheet stack, comprising:

- providing a first sheet and a second sheet;
- printing on at least a portion of the first or second sheet;
- following printing on the first or second sheet, applying a transparent protective coating to at least a portion of the first or second sheet;
- following applying the transparent protective coating, overlaying the first and second sheets so that at least a portion of the protective coating on the at least one sheet contacts the other sheet; and
- following overlaying the first and second sheets, applying a binding energy to a binding region defined on the first and second sheets to thereby bind the sheets into a sheet stack, the binding region comprising a selected area of the transparent protective coating on the at least one sheet, the selected area being in contact with the other sheet.

Claim 2 (original). The method of claim 1, and wherein the binding energy comprises at least one of heat, pressure, ultrasonic energy, or electromagnetic energy.

Claim 3 (original). The method of claim 1, and wherein the binding energy comprises a combination of heat and pressure.

1 Claim 4 (previously presented). The method of claim 1, and wherein the binding energy  
2 is selected to cause the transparent protective coating on the at least one sheet to  
3 substantially fuse to the other sheet in binding region.

4  
5 Claim 5 (withdrawn). The method of claim 1, and wherein the binding energy is selected  
6 to cause the protective coating on the at least one sheet to partially fuse to the other  
7 sheet in binding region.

8  
9 Claim 6 (previously presented). The method of claim 1, and further comprising:  
10 following applying a transparent protective coating to at least a portion of the first  
11 or second sheet, providing a third sheet;  
12 printing on at least a portion of the third sheet;  
13 following printing on the third sheet, applying a transparent protective coating to  
14 at least a portion of the third sheet;  
15 following applying a transparent protective coating to at least a portion of the third  
16 sheet, laying the third sheet onto the sheet stack so that so that at least a portion of the  
17 transparent protective coating on the third sheet contacts one of the first or the second  
18 sheet; and  
19 following laying the third sheet onto the sheet stack, applying the binding energy  
20 to the binding region to thereby bind the third sheet to the sheet stack.

21  
22 Claim 7 (original). The method of claim 1, and wherein the first and second sheets are  
23 each defined by a first edge, and when the sheets are overlaid, the first edges of the  
24 sheets substantially coincide, and further wherein the binding region extends inwardly  
25 from the first edge of the sheets.

1 Claim 8 (original). The method of claim 1, and wherein:

2 the sheets are each further defined by a first corner;

3 when the sheets are overlaid, the respective first corners substantially coincide;

4 and

5 the binding region is located at the first corner of the sheets.

6  
7 Claim 9 (original). The method of claim 1, and further comprising, prior to applying the  
8 binding energy, folding the first sheet to thereby create a first sheet folded edge, and  
9 folding the second sheet to thereby create a second sheet folded edge, and wherein the  
10 binding region extends along the folded edges of the sheets.

11  
12 Claim 10 (previously presented). A method of producing a bound document, comprising  
13 sequentially:

14 providing a first sheet of media;

15 providing a second sheet of media;

16 generating an image on the first sheet of media;

17 applying a transparent protective coating to the first sheet of media;

18 laying the second sheet onto the first sheet so at least a portion of the  
19 transparent protective coating on the first sheet contacts the second sheet; and

20 applying a binding energy to a preselected binding region of the first and second  
21 sheets to thereby bind the sheets into a sheet stack.

22  
23 Claim 11 (original). The method of claim 10, and wherein the binding energy is applied  
24 in the form of at least one of heat, pressure or ultrasonic energy.

1 Claim 12 (original). The method of claim 10, and wherein the first and second sheets of  
2 media are each defined by a respective first edge, and when the second sheet is laid  
3 onto the first sheet, the respective first edges of the sheets substantially coincide.

4  
5 Claim 13 (previously presented). The method of claim 12, and further comprising  
6 sequentially:

7 providing a third sheet of media which is defined by a first edge;

8 generating an image on the second sheet of media;

9 applying a transparent protective coating to the second sheet of media;

10 laying the third sheet onto the second sheet so at least a portion of the  
11 transparent protective coating on the second sheet contacts the third sheet and so that  
12 the respective first edges of the sheets substantially coincide; and

13 applying the binding energy to the preselected binding area to thereby bind the  
14 third sheet into the sheet stack.

15  
16 Claim 14 (withdrawn). The method of claim 13, and wherein the binding energy is first  
17 applied to the first and second sheets to form a sheet sub-stack, and the binding energy  
18 is then applied to the third sheet and the sheet sub-stack to form the sheet stack.

19  
20 Claim 15 (original). The method of claim 13, and wherein the binding energy is applied  
21 to the first, the second and the third sheets simultaneously to form the sheet stack.

22  
23 Claim 16 (previously presented). The method of claim 10, and wherein the binding  
24 energy is applied so as to cause the transparent protective coating on at least one of the  
25 sheets to become plastic in the preselected binding region.

Claims 17-24 (cancelled).

1 Claim 25 (new). The method of claim 1, and wherein the printing includes thermally  
2 fusing an imaging media to the first or second sheet.

3  
4 Claim 26 (new). The method of claim 10, and wherein the generating an image includes  
5 thermally fusing an imaging media to the first sheet of media.

6  
7 Claim 27 (new). A method of binding a plurality of sheets into a bound sheet stack,  
8 comprising:

9 providing a first sheet and a second sheet;

10 printing on at least a portion of the first or second sheet, wherein the printing  
11 includes thermally fusing an imaging media to the first or second sheet;

12 following printing on the first or second sheet, applying a transparent protective  
13 coating to at least a portion of the first or second sheet;

14 following applying the transparent protective coating, overlaying the first and  
15 second sheets so that at least a portion of the protective coating on the at least one  
16 sheet contacts the other sheet; and

17 following overlaying the first and second sheets, applying a thermal binding  
18 energy to a binding region defined on the first and second sheets to thereby bind the  
19 sheets into a sheet stack, the binding region comprising a selected area of the  
20 transparent protective coating on the at least one sheet, the selected area being in  
21 contact with the other sheet.

22  
23 (End of Amendment "D".)  
24  
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